

Daily Mercury

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BEHIND SHOW
SOCIETY PAGE 7**

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LIFT-OUT INSIDE TODAY

**FIND OUT ALL ABOUT
THIS WEEKEND'S FREE
DUMP DAY STORY P3**

Full steam ahead for Bowen Basin projects to fight downturn

FAST-TRACK FOR 1200 MINE JOBS

By **OWEN JACQUES**
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MORE than 1200 jobs will be created in our region as part of the Queensland Government fast-tracking a handful of giant mining projects in the Bowen Basin.

The Daily Mercury can reveal that of the 11 projects announced by Mines Minister Geoff Wilson in early February, at least five would supply business to our region.

Even with firm confidentiality agreements in place on these projects, this newspaper has learned that four of the projects will be built by two of Queensland's largest coal producers.

The government will 'fast-track' mining projects to help the resources industry rebound after it was stung with almost 3000 job

losses in the past three months.

One project chosen to be fast-tracked was from mining goliath BMA, which flagged more than 1000 job cuts in our region.

It will push ahead with both its Daunia and Caval Ridge mines being highlighted by the department. Daunia, to be built 25km south-east of Moranbah, is undergoing its environmental impact statement (EIS) but the open-cut operation could begin producing coal as soon as 2010 and would employ 450 people during construction dropping to 300 once finished.

Caval Ridge is also undergoing its EIS and is not planned to be operating until 2011, but once finished, would employ about 340 people at the open-cut operation.

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Smoothing way for 1200 coal mine jobs

FROM PAGE 1

ation on the outskirts of the mining town.

Ensham Resources is developing its Ensham Central Project – a new underground mine at its site near Emerald and is extending its current open-cut mining operations.

Ensham Mine made national headlines after parts of the mine filled with water during the deluge in January last year.

These add up to only four of the mining projects in our region that are being fast-tracked by the Queensland Government but details are scarce due to confidentiality agreements though the 1200 jobs for our region has been confirmed.

The fast-tracking was an effort by the State to cut through the red tape associated with planning mining projects and delivering jobs to mining areas hit hard by the economic crisis.

Darryl Crowder, who represents mining services for REDC, said it was great news for Mackay's industrial sector.

"It would give us all confidence that everyone in the engineering sector should continue in their development plans," Mr Crowder said.

"It should give them confidence so they don't wind back."

The BMA and Ensham projects were both already "in train" but to know they were powering on was a great sign for industry, he said.

"It will give us the confidence to know we can keep on going."

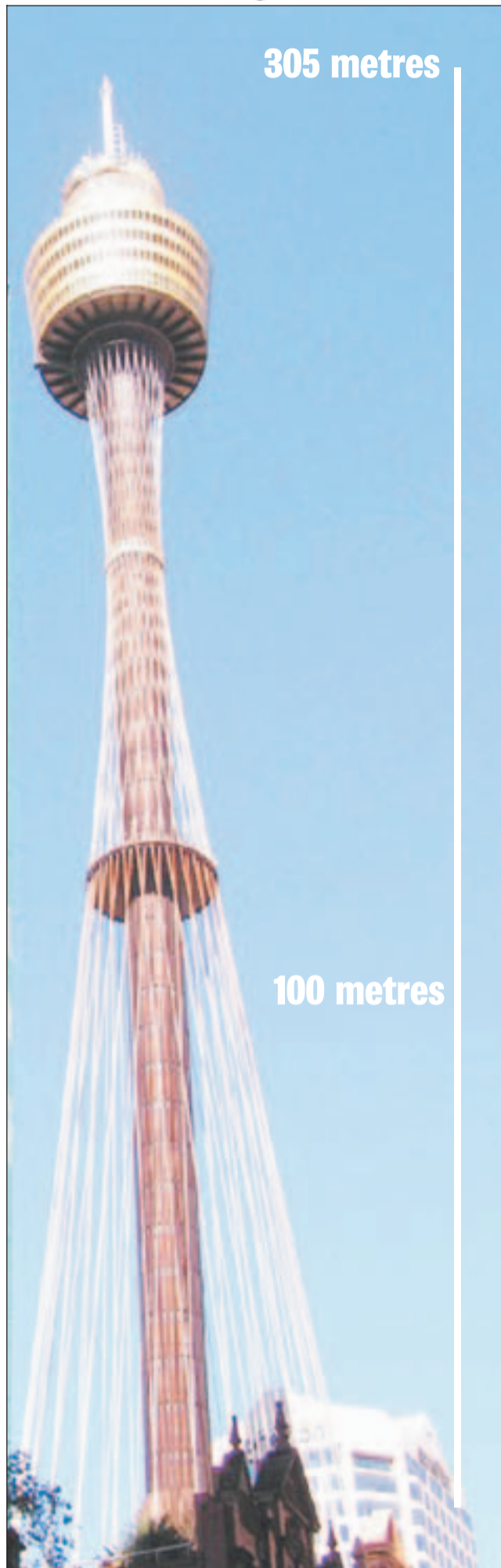
Engineering powerhouse HMG Westhill was just looking forward to the boost in work.

Marketing manager for HMG, Rodger Doudney said it was "absolutely great news".

"Some of the smaller businesses in Mackay rely on the bigger ones to be busy because they feed off them.

"But there are a number of projects going on at the minute," he said.

Dissenting voices over town's mobile phone structure



Sydney Tower is a landmark on the city's skyline. It is the tallest free-standing structure in Australia's largest city and the second tallest in the country.

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

A new tower near Glenden will be about one-third the height of this Sydney icon

By **BIANCA CLARE**

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THE small mining township of Glenden could soon have a new landmark.

A 100-metre-high Optus mobile phone and wireless broadband tower.

The tower would be almost the same height of St Paul's Cathedral in London, Brisbane Marriott Hotel, City Point in Melbourne and Parliament House in Canberra.

Or one-third the size of the iconic Sydney Tower.

Isaac Regional Council is reviewing a proposal for the tower which is intended to improve coverage throughout the rural area.

But not everyone in Glenden is happy about it.

At least 300 people so far have signed a petition opposing the proposed site of the tower.

Optus is proposing that the telecommunications tower be built in Usher Street – about 60 metres from their homes and schools.

Greens candidate for Mirani Christine Carlisle, said many Glenden resi-

dents were feeling anxious.

"While the safety of these installations remains an open question, there appears to be no reason why the tower could not be located away from existing residential homes, and proposed expansion areas," she said.

"Locating the tower near

This facility will enhance mobile and wireless broadband coverage in the area – delivering greater choice and competition for these services in Glenden.

– Optus spokesperson

the sewerage treatment plant may be more appropriate.

"Councils have a duty to care for the health of their constituents and should apply a precautionary principle when making these decisions."

Isaac Regional Council Mayor Cedric Marshall said

he would consider community concern before making any approvals.

"At the moment we are reviewing objections," he said.

A spokesperson for Optus said as part of the national expansion of its mobile and wireless broadband network, Optus had submitted a development application to build a 100m high mobile facility in Glenden.

"This facility will enhance mobile and wireless broadband coverage in the area – delivering greater choice and competition for these services in Glenden," the spokesperson said.

"Optus welcomes feedback from the community in relation to its mobile infrastructure.

"Optus works hard to strike a balance between customer demand for improved mobile and broadband coverage in the area and the preferences of individual residents," the spokesperson said.

Hinterland areas generally do not have the same degree of mobile phone coverage enjoyed by those who live on the coast.

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